

Appendix E—Estimating the Impacts of Our Recommendations

In this section of the report, we present the impact of our recommendations from three perspectives: (a) recidivism reduction, (b) prison and parole population reductions, and (c) financial costs and benefits associated with recidivism and correctional population reductions.

None of the recommendations made by the Panel will have any impact on the number of persons being sentenced by the courts to the CDCR or their sentence lengths. Rather our recommendations will only affect the large numbers of persons who are being returned to custody for violating their parole conditions and the amounts of time served in prison or on parole.

Our estimates are grounded in a large number of studies and the experiences of other states that have successfully implemented such reforms without adversely impacting public safety. However, we emphasize that the major recommendations require legislative, administrative, and programmatic changes before California can implement them.

The legislature, with the consent of the governor, must modify California's current sentencing laws, which affects how much good time prisoners receive. We are mindful that this may be more difficult to do for offenders sentenced under the state's two and three strikes laws, so we have separated our recommendations accordingly.

The CDCR must enact new administrative policies that reasonably restrict the large number of parolees being returned to prison for technical violations. This has been done before in California and is being done in other states. Finally, the CDCR, with proper funding from the legislature, will need to make significant changes in the number and types of programs it offers to prisoners and parolees. Ineffective programs that hold little, if any, promise of reducing recidivism need to be identified and de-funded as quickly as possible. Then, new and effective programs need to be created. For this to occur, the CDCR will need to re-organize its own operational capabilities as outlined in Appendix J.

It is important to note that these estimates are based on the data that were made available to the Panel by the CDCR as well as the experiences of the other state correctional systems. As such they are preliminary in nature and subject to modification based on further analysis that may be required. Once it becomes clear on the extent to which the recommendations will be adopted and implemented more precise estimates should be made. *It is also important to note that the CDCR has neither authenticated nor endorsed our estimates.*

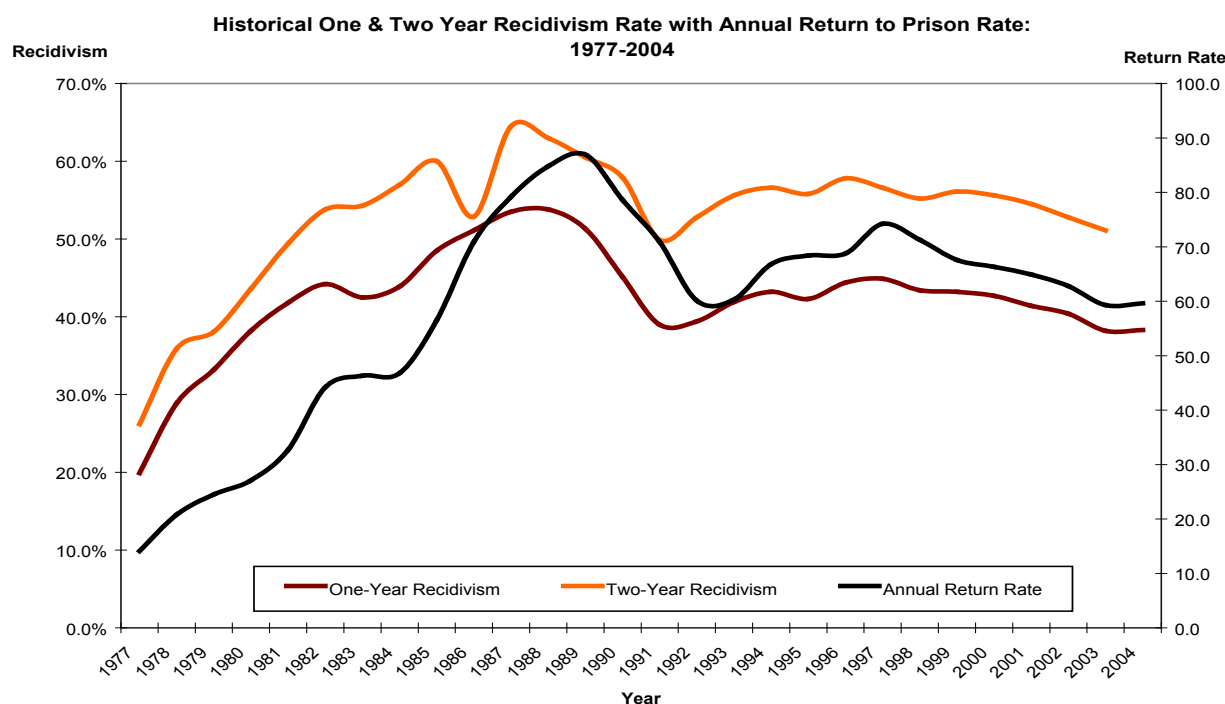
Nonetheless, we believe that if California were to implement our recommendations, the state may significantly reduce the large number of parolees who are currently violating their parole conditions and being returned to prison. Further, by expanding its incentive system, the state will encourage prisoners and parolees to participate in and complete programs. This could lower California's projected prison population with no major increase to the parole population. Coupled with the appropriate investments in prison and community based programming, we believe that our plan would increase public safety, reduce crime, and save taxpayer dollars.

Impact on Recidivism

One of the key objectives of the Panel's recommendations is to lower the CDCR's high recidivism rate. Recidivism rates are typically measured by tracking a cohort of prisoners

who were released in a given year and following them for several years. Traditionally, a recidivism rate is based on a three year follow-up period. The three measures of recidivism are (a) re-arrest, (b) reconviction, or c) a return to the prison system for either a new court conviction or a parole violation. California's recidivism rate as measured by the return to prison rate is one of highest in the nation (only Utah has a higher rate). However, this high rate reflects the California Board of Prison Term's and the CDCR's policy of returning to prison a large proportion of parolees that have been revoked for technical violations.^{af}

Figure E-1: California Department of Corrections Historical Recidivism Rates, 1977-2004^{ag}



California's return to prison recidivism rate was not always this high. As shown in Figure E-1, beginning in the late 1970s the CDCR's recidivism rate was much lower (below 30%). What is responsible for the dramatic increase? No single cause can be identified but contributing factors may include: (a) the passage of California's Determinate Sentencing Law (DSL) in 1977, which eliminated discretionary parole statutorily awarded good time credits, (b) the massive expansion of the CDCR population, and (c) the associated construction of "mega prisons"—large facilities designed to house several thousand prisoners. We believe that while it may not be possible to quickly or easily return to the recidivism rates of the late 1970's, it is possible to achieve significant reductions in the current return to prison rate.

^{af} Petersilia (2006); Jacobson (2003); US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (2001).

^{ag} The recidivism rate shown in this chart is based on "first releases to parole." This means that the cohort consists of prisoners who were experiencing their first release to parole and does not include parole violators who were being re-released. Excluding parole violators decreases the overall return-to-prison rate.

Three of our recommendations deal directly with recidivism reduction strategies:

11a. Restrict the use of total confinement for parole violations to only certain violations.

The largest reduction in the return to prison rate would occur if the state adopts the recommendation to divert between 44% and 64% of the parolees who are now being returned to prison for non felony criminal behavior and technical violations (see Table E-1). The CDCR could achieve this by developing and implementing a system of graduated responses to parole violations which provides for swift and certain punishments in the community.

These reductions in technical violations may seem large to some, yet if accomplished, it would result in California approaching the same percentage of parolees being returned to prison as reported by other states for either a technical or new felony. The most recent data from the US Department of Justice shows that 27% of all admissions to prison consist of parole violators (either technical or new felony crime).

Table E-1: Technical Parole Violator Diversion Estimates by Type of Return Based on 2006 Admissions

Type of Return	Number of Total	Number to be diverted at low end of range	Number to be diverted at high end of range
Those returned to custody but re-released to parole; We estimate that 80 to 100 percent should be diverted.	12,463 (18%)	9,970	12,463
Type I Administrative Criminal Returns (least serious crimes); We estimate that 40 to 60 percent should be diverted.	16,617 (24%)	6,647	9,970
Type II Administrative Criminal Returns (crimes of average seriousness); We estimate that 25 to 45 percent should be diverted.	16,617 (24%)	4,154	7,478
Type III Administrative Criminal Returns (most serious crimes); We estimate that 15 to 35 percent should be diverted.	9,693 (14%)	1,454	3,393
Administrative Non Criminal Returns; We estimate that 65 to 85 percent should be diverted.	13,155 (19%)	8,551	11,182
Total Parole Violators Diverted from Return To Prison		30,776 (44%)	44,485 (64%)

If California were to divert approximately 35,000 technical violators from re-imprisonment within the CDCR, total admissions would drop from approximately 142,000 to 107,000 (see Table E-2).

But even this reduction would not match the norm of other state prison systems. The third column of Table E-2 shows that if the CDCR were to have the same policies as other states, the total number of admissions would decline to approximately 71,000. This estimate assumes that 40% of the offenders admitted to prison would return after being released on parole (the same rate reported by BJS minus California's data). As shown in Table E-2, were California to reach the national recidivism average, the percent of admissions to prison who are parole violators would be reduced to approximately 20,000 or 29% of all admissions—which is virtually the same as the national rate (27%). We believe that this is a very achievable outcome given the experience of the other states.

Table E-2 Estimated Impact of Recommendation 9a on Prison Admissions by Type of Admission

	Current		Recommended		Based on Other States*	
Admissions Type	N	%	N	%	N	%
Felony Court	50,708	36%	50,708	47%	50,708	71%
Parole Violators	91,173	64%	56,555	53%	20,283	29%
Technical	69,237	49%	34,619	32%	10,142	14%
New Felony	21,936	15%	21,936	20%	10,142	14%
Total	141,881	100%	107,263	100%	70,991	100%
Based on all states participating in the Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics Series, August 2, 2000.						

9a. Based on a normed and validated instrument assessing risk to reoffend, release low-risk, non-violent, non-sex registrants from prison without placing them on parole supervision. The second way to reduce returns to prison is to not supervise low risk parolees. Previous studies have shown that imposing parole and probation supervision conditions on those who are unlikely to recidivate serves to actually increase recidivism rates. Table E-2 shows the results of several studies of the relative effects of supervision on offenders by risk level. Here one can see that supervised low risk offenders have higher recidivism rates. By not supervising them the recidivism rates will actually decrease.

6. Select and deliver in prison and in the community a core set of programs that covers the six major offender programming areas—(a) Academic, Vocational, and Financial; (b) Alcohol and other Drugs; (c) Aggression, Hostility, Anger, and Violence; (d) Criminal Thinking, Behaviors, and Associations; (e) Family, Marital, and Relationships; and (f) Sex Offending. The third way for California to reduce its recidivism rate is by offering prisoners and parolees programs that will address and treat their educational, vocational training, mental health, and related criminogenic needs. As offenders receive programming that addresses these needs, there should be a modest but significant reduction in their criminal behavior.

Table E-3 summarizes the expected return to prison recidivism reductions for each of these three major recommendations. This table is based on the total number of persons who were admitted to the CDCR in 2006 for failing parole for either a new felony conviction or a technical violation. As suggested previously, the largest reduction in the 91,173 now being returned back to prison each year would be persons who have failed parole for technical violations (a reduction of 30,776 to 44,485). In total, the recommendations would reduce the total number of returns to prison by between 35,000 and 50,000 or approximately 39-55%.

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Table E-3 Estimated Impact of Recommendations of Released Prisoners Being Returned to Prison

Return to Prison Recidivism Numbers		Number Per Year
Total number of CDCR parole violators admitted to prison in 2006.		91,173
Parole violators with new felony convictions		21,936
Parole violators admitted for technical violations		69,237
Factor	% Change	Reductions in Returns to Prison Per Year
11a. Restrict the use of total confinement for parole violations to only certain violations.	44%-64% reduction of 69,237 technical violators	-30,776 to -44,485
9a. Based on a normed and validated instrument assessing risk to reoffend, release low-risk, non-violent, non-sex registrants from prison without placing them on parole supervision (15% of prisoners).	35% of low-risk prisoners released to parole for the first time do not return to prison	-3,538
6. Select and deliver in prison and in the community a core set of programs that covers the six major offender programming areas—(a) Academic, Vocational, and Financial; (b) Alcohol and other Drugs; (c) Aggression, Hostility, Anger, and Violence; (d) Criminal Thinking, Behaviors, and Associations; (e) Family, Marital, and Relationships; and (f) Sex Offending.	5%-10% of the parole violators with a new felony do not return to prison	-1,097 to -2,194
Total Reduction In Parole Returns to Prison	-35,411 to -50,217 or a 39%-55% reduction	
<i>Source: CDCR Admission data file for 2006</i>		

Impact on Prison and Parole Populations

There are three operational requirements for successful offender programming: (a) adequate program space for the programs to function, (b) the physical locations where the programs are being delivered must be safe, and (c) there must be incentives for offenders to participate. Few of these conditions exist currently within the CDCR.^{ah} Space-wise, although we don't have the precise figures, we know that because of overcrowding, designated program spaces have been converted to housing units. From a safety standpoint, there is growing evidence of increased violence and disruptive behavior within the CDCR—the rate of serious incidents increased from 4.7 per 100 prisoners in 1990, to 7.9 per 100 prisoners in 2005 (CDCR, 2006). And in the area of incentives, with California's DSL, there are few incentives for prisoners to participate in meaningful programs as they know that they will be released at the same time as prisoners who do not participate.

In Appendix L, we provided information concerning the CDCR's current population. It should be noted that the CDCR latest projections estimate that by the year 2012, the CDCR's prison population will increase from 172,385 to 190,000, and its parole population from 123,781 to 133,000.

We developed our own estimates of the impacts of our recommendations on the CDCR prison and parole populations. We based these estimates on data provided by the CDCR on admissions and releases for the prison and parole systems. Our estimates only assume a "steady state" environment and do not indicate how our recommendations would impact future sized populations. Again, we note that the CDCR has neither authenticated nor endorsed our estimates.

^{ah} There are some individual facilities that are successfully delivering effective programs, however, systemically, the CDCR has to resolve its issues with space, safety, and incentives.

We believe that if all of our recommendations are adopted, the current prison population would be reduced by approximately 41,000 to 48,000 prisoners and the number of admissions to prison for all parole violators (including new felonies) will be reduced by between 35,000 and 50,000 parolees. We believe that there are three recommendations that deal directly with reducing the offender populations:

2. Enact legislation to expand its system of positive reinforcements for offenders who successfully complete their rehabilitation program requirements, comply with institutional rules in prison, and fulfill their parole obligations in the community.

The three sub-recommendations of this recommendation must be applied to have the desired population reduction effect. We also note that each component will require new legislation that would modify the current California Penal Code (CPC).

2a. Award earned credits to offenders who complete any rehabilitation program in prison and on parole. This recommendation would allow prisoners who complete education, vocational training, and substance abuse treatment programs the opportunity to receive an average of four months off of their prison release dates (including all sentenced felons regardless of their offense or strike levels). It would encourage prisoners (who could benefit) to participate in well-structured and effective rehabilitative programs and thus help lower their reoffending rates. At the same time, prisoners who complete these programs would benefit by having their period of imprisonment reduced. Virtually all of the other states plus the Federal prison system allow for prison terms to be reduced if a prisoner completes rehabilitative services. Further it has been widely established by a number of studies, including those conducted by the US Department of Justice and the CDCR, there is no relationship between time served and recidivism (US Department of Justice, 2006). Therefore, releasing prisoners early as a result of earning program credits will not increase their recidivism rates. In fact, because they will have participated in effective programming targeted to reduce their criminogenic needs factors, we expect their recidivism rates to decrease. Table E-4 demonstrates the relationship between length of stay and recidivism using CDCR data.

Table E-4 CDCR Recidivism Rates for First Releases by Time Served, 2000-2002

Time Served	Release Year					
	2000		2001		2002	
Total	100.0%	60.6%	100.0%	59.4%	100.0%	57.3%
0 – 6	15.9%	66.0%	16.7%	63.5%	17.6%	61.9%
7 – 12	37.0%	62.6%	35.5%	62.7%	33.1%	60.1%
13 – 18	16.9%	59.0%	16.6%	57.7%	16.3%	55.7%
19 – 24	11.1%	58.6%	10.7%	57.9%	11.2%	55.9%
25 – 30	4.8%	55.6%	5.1%	54.0%	5.0%	52.4%
31 – 36	3.6%	54.9%	3.9%	53.4%	3.9%	52.5%
37 – 60	7.1%	53.9%	7.2%	49.5%	7.4%	49.8%
61 +	3.5%	56.1%	4.2%	53.5%	5.5%	51.0%
Source: CDCR						

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Impact: Based on an assumption that 50,000 to 56,000 prisoners of a release cohort would complete such a program and receive an average four-month award, the number of beds saved would be approximately 17,000 to 19,000.^{ai}

2b. Replace Work Incentive Program (WIP) credits with statutorily-based good time incentive credits. This recommendation would allow offenders to earn good time credits based upon statute, rather than program participation. This would provide more equity and certainty to the punishment being handed out by the courts. Table E-5 shows the numbers of prisoners who are statutorily eligible for day-for-day (“good time”) credits and the percentage of their sentences that they are actually serving. Here one can see that on average, prisoners eligible for day-for-day work incentive credits are actually serving over 60% of their sentences when jail credits (the amount time spent in local jails awaiting the disposition of their case(s) and transfers to the CDCR) are added to the calculations (see Table E-5).

If they were receiving day-for-day, their time served in prison would be reduced by a modest 2-4 months. And since Table E-4 shows that there is no relationship between length of stay (at far greater amounts) and recidivism we know this policy would not adversely impact public safety. This conclusion is further buttressed by a large number of studies showing no relationship between length of stay and recidivism rates (NCCD, 2007).

Many other states allow prisoners to receive day-for-day credits statutorily, rather than based on participation in some type of program or work assignment. Indeed before the passage of DSL, California’s laws allowed all prisoners to be eligible for parole at 1/3rd of their sentences thru the application of statutory credits. Returning back to that concept would provide more equity and certainty to the punishment being handed out by the courts.

Table E-5: Percent Time Served For New Court Commitments and Parole Violators with New Terms Only Eligible for Day-for-Day Credits 2006 Releases

Good Time Earning Class	Releases	Average Sentence	Jail Credits	CDCR Time	Total Time Served	% of Sentence
50%	56,397	31 mos.	7 mos.	12 mos.	19 mos.	61%
20%	7,632	58 mos.	5 mos.	42 mos.	50 mos.	84%
15%	5,082	63 mos	9 mos	47 mos	56 mos	89%

Source: CDCR 2006 Release File. 1,572 other releases not shown.

Impact: Assuming that those prisoners now eligible for the WIP day for day credits were to receive them statutorily, the number of prison beds saved would be approximately 14,000. This estimate takes into account the amount of good time that is being revoked by the CDCR for rules infractions. The effects would be even greater if prisoners in the 20% and 15% earning classes who have much longer sentences were to be eligible for the 50% class. Specifically if the 20% earning class was modified to 50%, the long term effects would be approximately 13,000 bed reduction. If applied to the 15% earning class, the bed savings would be approximately 10,000. So if applied to all prisoners, the net effect would be about 37,000 in bed savings.

^{ai} Table E-7 shows that between 55,000 and 62,000 offenders would be eligible for in-prison programming in a given year. Assuming that 10% (5,500 to 6,200) fail to complete the program, we estimate that approximately 50,000 to 56,000 offenders successfully complete programs.

2c. Implement an earned discharge parole supervision strategy for all parolees released from prison after serving a period of incarceration for an offense other than those listed as serious and violent under CPC 1192.7(c) and 667.5(c) criteria. This recommendation would serve to reduce the time parolees spend on parole supervision based on good conduct and-or program participation. If the recommendations 6a and 6b are implemented, it is likely that the parole population will significantly increase unless similar efforts are enacted to reduce the time served on parole and-or successful parole completion rates are increased. The California legislature recently introduced several bills that would make such reductions possible. For example, Senate Bill 1453 would reduce the period of supervision by six months when a parolee completes a substance abuse program while on supervision. It is estimated that 5,250 parolees would be impacted by this bill, which would reduce the parole population by 2,500. Our recommendation builds upon these bills.

Impact: Since these reforms are tied to yet unknown risk levels of the parole population as well as their capacity to meet the behavioral standards, it is not possible to make a precise impact estimate. However, we believe that the parole population would be reduced by approximately 29,000 parolees, based on the assumptions that:

- *about 85% of the 67,000 prisoners being admitted to parole for their first release will be in the moderate to high risk to reoffend category (an estimated 57,000 first parole admissions), and*
- *that at least 50% of them (28,500) will meet the threshold for having their periods of parole supervision reduced by at least a year.*

9a. Based on a normed and validated instrument assessing risk to reoffend, release low-risk, non-violent, non-sex registrants from prison without placing them on parole supervision. This recommendation would simply eliminate supervision for low risk parolees.

Impact: We believe that approximately 875 prison beds would be saved, based on the assumptions that:

- *approximately 15% of the 67,000 first-time admissions to parole being reinstated or re-released are low risk (an estimated 10,000 parolees), and*
- *35% of them (approximately 3,500) are being returned for technical violations for which they return to prison for approximately 3 months.*

More importantly, the projected parole population would decline by approximately 20,000 assuming these low risk parolees currently are being supervised for an average of 2 years.

11a. Restrict the use of total confinement for parole violations to only certain violations. The large numbers of technical violators returned each year represents an ineffective approach to managing non-compliant behavior on the part of CDCR parolees. While we do not expect to completely turn off the technical violation stream without a statutory prohibition, as was done in Washington State, we do believe it reasonable and desirable to considerably reduce the current rate by establishing new policies and implementing an array of graduated parole violation sanctions. By diverting these prisoners from supervision, fewer be returned to prison for technical violations.

Impact: Based on an assumption that over a two year period there will be a 44-64% reduction in the return rate for technical violations, the number of persons admitted to the CDCR for technical violations would decline from 69,000 to between 25,000 and 38,500. Of those diverted, 10,000-12,500 would only have been returned to the CDCR for 2 weeks and then re-released to parole. The number of prison beds saved for this group would be approximately 500 beds. For the remainder, based on their

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current average length of stay of three months, the number of prison beds saved would range from approximately 6,500 to 9,500.

Table E-6 provides a summary of our population reduction impacts. In total the current CDCR prisoner population would be reduced by between 38,500 and 43,500 prisoners—largely by establishing a programs incentive system along the lines adopted by other state prison systems. The parole population would be reduced by between 6,500 and 11,500.

Table E-6: Summary of Population Reduction Impacts Rounded to Nearest 500

Recommendation	Targeted Prison and Parole Releases and Admissions per Year	Approximate Prison Bed Savings	Approximate Impact on Parole Population
2a. Award earned credits to offenders who complete any rehabilitation program in prison and on parole.	50,000 – 56,000 prison releases	17,000 – 19,000	Adds 17,000 – 19,000
2b. Replace Work Incentive Program (WIP) credits with statutorily-based good time incentive credits.	56,000 prison releases in the 50% good time earning class	14,000 (an additional 23,000 if other earning classes are added)	Adds 14,000
2c. Implement an earned discharge parole supervision strategy for all parolees released from prison after serving a period of incarceration for an offense other than those listed as serious and violent under CPC 1192.7(c) and 667.5(c) criteria.	57,000 moderate to high risk parole admissions	Not able to estimate	Reduces 29,000
9a. Based on a normed and validated instrument assessing risk to reoffend, release low-risk, non-violent, non-sex registrants from prison without placing them on parole supervision.	Low risk parolees	1,000	Reduces 20,000
11a. Restrict the use of total confinement for parole violations to only certain violations.	31,000 to 44,500 technical parole violators diverted from prison	6,500 - 9,500	Adds 6,500 - 9,500
Totals		38,500 to 43,500	Less 6,500 to 11,500

How quickly California can achieve these reductions will depend upon a number of options available to the state. If the legislature makes the necessary changes in good time laws for the non-two and three strike prisoners retroactive to all prisoners currently incarcerated, most of the effects would occur within two years. Similarly, if the CDCR were to make administrative changes in its policies toward parole violators, most of the effects would be realized within two years. Changes based on additional and more effective treatment will take many years to realize. It will take several years to develop proper risk assessment systems, start assigning prisoners by risk, and ramp up the needed programs.

Financial Impacts of Recommendations

In this section we provide preliminary estimates of the costs and savings associated with the recommendations that will impact (a) the number of parolees who are now failing parole supervision and return to prison each year, (b) the amount of time served in prison, and (c) the amount of time served on parole. We have also estimated the costs of adding more programs which are listed as offsets to the prison and parole supervision savings. We estimate the total costs of all the new programmatic initiatives along with the savings associated with prison bed reductions that result from the population management strategies and from reduced recidivism as a result of the programs.

New Program Costs

To calculate the annual cost of delivering program services to prisoners based on their risk and need, the Panel examined total prison admissions during 2006.^{aj} We recommend that the CDCR have enough resources to provide enough programs for the following categories of prisoners:

- Technical Violators: We assume that 50% of all technical parole violators (who all have very short lengths of stay—about three months on average) will receive two months of programming. The cost for an annual program “slot” (six prisoners) is \$3,000.
- Prisoners with new court convictions who stay for less than 12 months: We assume that 50% of these prisoners will receive three months of programs. The cost for an annual program slot (four prisoners) is \$3,000.
- Long-term prisoners sentenced to 20 years or more, including lifers: We assume that 50% of these prisoners will receive six months of programs. The cost for an annual program slot (two prisoners) is \$10,000.
- Prisoners with a low risk to reoffend: We assume that 50% of these prisoners will receive six months of vocational education and life skills training. The cost for an annual program slot (two prisoners) is \$4,000.
- Prisoners with a high risk to reoffend and moderate length of stays. We assume that all these prisoners will receive nine months of intensive programs ranging from drug treatment to criminal thinking. The cost for an annual program slot (1.3 prisoners) is \$5,000.

As Table E-7 shows, the annual cost for providing these programs is approximately \$121-\$124 million.

^{aj} Program cost information is based on national estimates.

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Table E-7: Costs of Providing In-Prison Programs

Admission Type	Total Admissions	Eligible Admissions	Program Length	Yearly Cost of Program	Total Cost
Technical Violator	24,752 - 38,461	12,376 - 19,231	2 months	\$3,000	\$6,188,000 - \$9,615,250
Serving less than 12 months	31,673	15,837	3 months	\$3,000	\$11,877,375
Sentenced to Life	1,081	541	6 months	\$10,000	\$2,702,500
Sentenced to 20 years or more	2,290	1,145	6 months	\$10,000	\$5,725,000
Low risk to recidivate	7,520	3,760	6 months	\$4,000	\$7,520,000
High needs and high risk to recidivate	21,568	21,568	9 months	\$5,000	\$80,880,000
(Total Eligible for Programs)		55,226 - 62,081			
In Prison Program Costs				\$114,892,875 - \$118,320,125	
(Plus additional custody costs of 5%)					\$5,523 - \$6,208
Total In Prison Program Costs					\$120,637,519 - \$124,236,131

In addition to the in-prison resources required to fund these programmatic initiatives, the CDCR also needs to invest heavily in post-prison aftercare. In-prison programming must be followed up in the community in order to achieve the desired reductions in recidivism and the CDCR must also have the resources to create a variety of intermediate sanctions and programs in order to divert the large number of technical violators from prison that we are recommending. We are assuming a variety of programming needs for between 120,000 and 125,000 parolees.^{ak} Our funding recommendation includes enough money for an average of six months of intensive programming for all these parolees. At a cost of \$7,500 for an annual program slot, the total funding required is between \$450 and \$469 million. The total funds needed for in prison and community based programming is between \$628 and \$652 million.

Savings from Overcrowding Reduction Strategies

Based on the recommendations outlined (summarized in Table E-6), we expect to save between 39,000 and 44,000 beds (see Table E-6). Using the CDCR marginal-overcrowding rate of \$20,597 per bed, we expect to save a total of between \$803 and \$906 million annually.

Savings from Recidivism Reductions

Based on research, we are assuming an overall reduction in recidivism range of 5 to 10 percent for new felony convictions as a result of these new programming initiatives. The most important result of this reduction is, of course, less crime and fewer victims. There is an added benefit that since fewer people on parole will return to prison for new crimes, the prison system will require fewer prison beds. The estimated result of Recommendation 4 is that between 1,097 and 2,194 parole violators with new felonies do not return to prison (See Table E-3). Assuming an average length of stay of 24 months, this would result in a decrease of between 2,194 to 4,388 beds and an annual budget savings of between \$45 and \$90 million.

^{ak} In 2006, there were 131,356 admissions to parole (CDCR). We reduced this number by 6,500 to 11,500 based on the expected effects of our population management strategies. See Table E-6.

Budget Offsets

Though we are recommending significant funding for both in-prison and community-based programming, the CDCR already spends money on these functions that can offset the costs of the programming we are recommending (Again, this will not happen overnight as CDCR would need to hire different kinds of staff, contract with different organizations to provide the services, and generally transition from one set of program designs and priorities to another. This will take time but in the long run the current and planned programmatic budgets of the CDCR can be used to help “pay” for these investments). We estimate that the CDCR currently spends \$340 million to deliver a variety of programmatic interventions both in prison and after release to its adult offender populations.^{al}

Financial Summary

Table E-8 summarizes the overall new funding needed for additional prison and community programs, the savings realized through our recommended population management strategies and reductions in recidivism, and the offsets to the new funding that are part of CDCR’s baseline budget.

Table E-8: Total Costs and Savings of Proposed Programming and Population Reduction Strategies

		Costs	Dollar Savings	Bed Savings
Costs	Cost of Prison Programs	\$120,637,519 - \$124,236,131		
	Cost of Parole-Community Corrections	\$450,000,000 - \$468,750,000		
	<i>Total Costs</i>	<i>\$570,637,519 - \$592,986,131</i>		
	+ 10% increased CA costs*	\$57,063,752 - \$59,298,613		
	<i>Net Costs</i>	<i>\$627,701,271 - \$652,284,744</i>		
Bed Reduction Savings	Prison Bed Savings		\$803,283,000 - \$906,268,000	
	Recidivism Savings		\$45,181,579 - \$90,379,636	
	<i>Total Bed Reduction Savings</i>		<i>\$848,464,579 - \$996,647,636</i>	
Offsets	Current Budget Funding for Prison and Parole Programming		\$340 000,000	
	<i>Total Current Spending</i>		<i>\$340,000,000</i>	
	<i>Total Savings</i>		<i>\$1,188,464,579 - \$1,336,647,636</i>	
	Net Savings		\$560,763,308 - \$684,362,892	
	<i>Beds saved through population reduction</i>			<i>38,000 - 44,000</i>
	<i>Beds saved through recidivism reduction</i>			<i>2,200 - 4,400</i>
	Overall Bed Savings			41,200 - 48,400
*A preliminary estimate of the increased costs for funding correctional programs in California compared to the rest of the country. See Gordon et. al. (2007).				

^{al} This figure is an estimate based on the current CDCR budget.

APPENDIX E—ESTIMATING THE IMPACTS OF OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

In this report we recommend strategies that would reduce the number of prison beds that California needs by 42,000 to 48,000 beds. The result would mean an annual savings of between \$848 and \$996 million. New investments in prison and community programming should cost between \$628 and \$652 million a year. A significant portion of these costs, or \$340 million a year, which the CDCR now spends on programs, could ultimately be used to offset these new expenditures. In total, all of these new strategies combined could save California between \$561 and \$684 million a year.

